



U.S. Department of Justice

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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GUILTY VERDICT RETURNED

MACON: Maxwell Wood, United States Attorney for the Middle District of Georgia, announces that late on Wednesday afternoon, March 9, 2005, a District Court jury sitting in the Columbus Division of the Middle District of Georgia returned guilty verdicts on counts of bank fraud and wire fraud as to defendant **RON FLETCHER PARKER**. The jury acquitted Parker's wife and co-defendant Alesia W. Parker. Mr. Parker's conviction remains subject to post-trial motions and appeal proceedings. At the time when Mr. Parker was indicted, he had become the owner and operator of SunChase Mortgage, a mortgage broker in Columbus.


The Parkers were charged with obtaining a loan by fraud from EquiCredit Corporation of Georgia through its former branch office in Columbus. Mr. Parker was the assistant manager of that lending office at the time of the loan. Mrs. Parker was listed as the applicant but in her maiden name, Alesia Wajda. The government charged that the loan application contained a number of false representations about Ms. Parker's earnings and economic picture. In addition, the loan was presented as an owner-occupied refinance loan on a property that was appraised for \$65,000, yet the money obtained through the loan was used to purchase the underlying property for slightly less than \$40,000 after the refinance loan was closed. The government presented proof at trial to support the conclusion that Mr. Parker orchestrated the false representations and

false documents that supported the loan, even while he kept his name out of EquiCredit's loan file.

The Federal Bureau of Investigation, Columbus Resident Office, in association with the United States Attorney, has conducted an extensive investigation of the loan practices at EquiCredit's former branch office in Columbus, focusing on the time frame of January 1999 through October 2000. In the past year, fourteen individual defendants have been convicted for their participation in fraudulent loan transactions. Those convicted now include four of EquiCredit's five local employees in the Columbus branch office, five different employees or broker-associates of the now-defunct Integra Mortgage operation in Columbus, two brokers affiliated with another mortgage broker, and two persons who were involved with appraisals.

For additional information, contact Sue McKinney, Media Contact, at 478-621-2602.

APPROVED FOR RELEASE

G. J. Pateman  for Maxwell Wood

**MAXWELL WOOD
UNITED STATES ATTORNEY**